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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/824,621	04/02/2001	Harold Mattice	403120	1062
27717	7590	05/05/2004	EXAMINER	
SEYFARTH SHAW 55 EAST MONROE STREET SUITE 4200 CHICAGO, IL 60603-5803			COBURN, CORBETT B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3714	
DATE MAILED: 05/05/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	09/824,621	MATTICE ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	Corbett B. Coburn	3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

1)  Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 May 2003.

2a)  This action is **FINAL**.                            2b)  This action is non-final.

3)  Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

4)  Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6)  Claim(s) 1-36 is/are rejected.

7)  Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8)  Claim(s) 1-36 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

9)  The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)  The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a)  accepted or b)  objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)  The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a)  All b)  Some \* c)  None of:  
1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

1)  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2)  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3)  Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
4)  Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.  
5)  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6)  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Double Patenting*

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 27-31 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,996. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they are obvious variants of the same invention. As pointed out in the prior office action (Paper # 5), the primary difference between LeMay and the current invention is that the current invention calls the lock a "latch" – terminology that is not found in LeMay. To paraphrase Shakespeare, "A lock by any other name would limit access."

3. Claims 1-4, 9, 11 & 32-34 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,996 in view of Lucero et al. (US Patent Number 4,072,930). As pointed out in the prior office action (Paper # 5), LeMay teaches limiting access to authorized personnel but does not explicitly teach identifying the authorized personnel. While the current Examiner believes that identification is an inherent quality subsumed within the definition of "authorized", the former

examiner pointed out that Lucero explicitly states that authorized personnel are identified.

Clearly, it would be obvious to identify the authorized personnel – otherwise there would be no way to tell if they were, in fact, “authorized”.

4. Claims 5-8, 10, 12-26, 35 & 36 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,996 in view of Lucero et al. (US Patent Number 4,072,930) in view of Muir (US Patent Number 5,923,249). As pointed out in the prior office action (Paper # 5), LeMay teaches limiting access to authorized personnel but does not explicitly teach use of a switch. Again, this is matter of terminology. LeMay teaches use of an electronic lock. A switch must control this electronic lock.

***Election/Restrictions***

5. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-10, drawn to apparatus for controlling access to areas in a single gaming machine, classified in class 463, subclass 29.
- II. Claims 11-16, drawn to apparatus for controlling access to areas in a network of gaming machines, classified in class 463, subclass 42.
- III. Claims 17-26, drawn to an apparatus for monitoring the conditions of a door, classified in class 463, subclass 46.
- IV. Claims 27-31, drawn to a gaming machine with a mechanical key, classified in class 463, subclass 29.
- V. Claims 32-36, drawn to a method of controlling access, classified in class 463, subclass 29.

6. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:
7. Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because it does not require the network of gaming machines. The subcombination has separate utility such as controlling access to a network of gaming machines.
8. Inventions I and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as controlling access to the gaming machine without monitoring the condition of the door. See MPEP § 806.05(d).
9. Inventions I and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as controlling access to a slot machine without a mechanical key. See MPEP § 806.05(d).
10. Inventions I and V are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process (invention V) can be practiced by a materially different apparatus (i.e., a simple group of electronic combination locks).

11. Similar analysis is possible with each of the remaining combinations of groups. Should Applicant elect one of the groups other than group I, and, should Applicant request it, Examiner will be happy to provide such an analysis.

12. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper:

13. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II-V, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

14. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

15. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

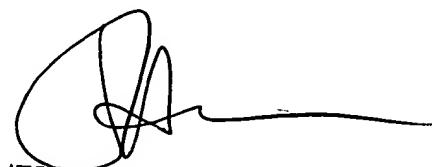
16. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Corbett B. Coburn whose telephone number is (703) 305-3319. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30, Monday-Friday, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Primary, Jessica Harrison can be reached on (703) 308-2217. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
cbc

  
JESSICA HARRISON  
PRIMARY EXAMINER